Why we should intervene: 1.The death toll--approaching 8,000--is now five times what it was in Libya on the eve of the NATO intervention there. 2. The Turks, Qataris, Tunisians and Saudis have all called for various degrees of intervention, whether through safe zones, peacekeeping forces or arms for the Syrian rebels. But these countries cannot do it on their own. 3. President Bashar Assad believes he can outlast the opposition and ultimately obliterate it through sheer force and brutality. **4.** Helping the rebels peel off large pieces of territory would demonstrate to Assad that he cannot win militarily, which would breathe new life into diplomatic efforts or--at the very least--secure cease-fire agreements around key population centers. 5. In late May, an increasingly desperate Libyan regime went further, offering to negotiate with rebels and institute constitutional reforms. 6. None of this, though, will be possible without U.S. support and leadership. Despite budgetary constraints, this is not the time for the Obama Administration to shrink from the challenge at hand. Even if the U.S. insists on leading from behind, it still needs to lead.

**Why we shouldn’t intervene:1.** The escalating bloodshed in Syria has shocked the world and prompted calls for military intervention. 2. Dozens of Syrians are being killed every day by the forces of President Bashar Assad, spiraling violence threatens to drag the country into a regional proxy war. 3. The Obama Administration clearly wants, as it should, to help protect the Syrian people. But it also should understand that military intervention is not the way to help civilians or hasten a political transition in Syria. 4. but establishing safe areas would require massive bombing to destroy Syria's antiaircraft capability and ensure the safety of allied planes. 5. Declaring a safe area is meaningless if there is no military means or will to defend it, as we discovered to our horror in Bosnia. 6. And by funneling arms to the rebels in the absence of any unified leadership, we could not hope to even the military balance of power.